

Testimony in Support of HB 6635, An Act Concerning Solar Power

Members of the Energy and Technology Committee: Thank you for seeking and receiving my testimony on behalf of the "Go Solar Connecticut" campaign.

My name is Rev. Gordon Bates. I am a retired minister of the United Church of Christ. I write on behalf of several layers of people inside and apart from the UCC. I currently serve as Chairperson of the UCC national Task Force on Environment and Energy. More importantly for this testimony, I co-chair a local group called Gaining a Greener Glastonbury, composed of representatives of various religious congregations in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

I write to urge you to do what needs to be done to keep the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund solvent and available to provide solar rebate funds. In this economic crisis this is precisely the time to maintain a stable solar industry in Connecticut. Green jobs are the wave of the future, not simply a "nice to have if we could afford it" program. You are aware that numerous towns in our state are ready to move forward with solar installations of various kinds and that most of those are on hold at present.

I urge you, with many other, to take advantage of this massive interest in solar energy to work towards an increase in that source for the homes that are poised to use it, and for the businesses and public buildings that can cut their costs by reducing their use of fossil fuels. That will not happen unless we work to find ways to allow solar energy to compete on a level field with those rapidly diminishing fossil fuel sources.

As the world moves quickly toward or past "Peak Oil and Natural Gas," when the demand exceeds the reserves we draw upon and becomes irreversible, we cannot afford to ignore solar and other energy sources as though we have all the time in the world to make up our minds about the choices available to us.

Don't lose this opportunity. HB 6635, An Act Concerning Solar Power, is one doorway into this new world of energy that keeps on giving.

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